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## THE DEVELOPMENT OF MOROCCO

*By H. Perceval Dodge, Former American Minister to Morocco*

On March 30, 1912, there was signed by representatives of the French Republic and the Sultan of Morocco a treaty by which Morocco became a French Protectorate. The passing of Morocco from its sovereign status, which thus reduced to Abyssinia and Liberia the states in the continent of Africa still retaining their independence, had long been foreseen to be merely a question of time. Covering a great territory lying but a few miles from Europe with a healthful climate and large undeveloped agricultural and mineral resources, it possessed a government which further invited European aggression by its weakness and its pretension to thwart all foreign development of the country. Further it has seemed clear for many years that Morocco would eventually become a French possession since geographically and ethnologically it formed the proper complement of Algeria and Tunis and France more than any other Power had the resources and knowledge of local conditions required for the successful regeneration of the country. This regeneration to be permanent and effective required the extension to the Sultan of very considerable military assistance to enable him to reestablish his authority then scarcely recognized beyond the vicinity of Fez; the complete reform of the corrupt and disorganized administration and finally financial and technical aid for the construction of the most urgent public works in a country in which even the most necessary ones were non-existent. Unfortunately the development of Morocco by France was long retarded by the colonial rivalry of some of the Great Powers and this rivalry resulted on April 7,

1906, in the signature of the act of Algeciras by which it was attempted to reform and develop Morocco by a partial "internationalization" of the Sultan's government. The regeneration of Morocco however was not a task which could be accomplished by any such complicated and unwieldy a system of government and it was not long before this became evident.

Accordingly immediately after the signature of the act of Algeciras, the French Government began negotiations with the Powers chiefly interested in Morocco with a view to securing for itself complete freedom of action. Satisfactory arrangements were made with England, Italy and on two occasions, after much difficulty, with Germany, each of these Powers being given compensation elsewhere. Arrangements with Spain were concluded on November 27, 1912, and were based upon a recognition of her historic rights in Morocco. They included the cession to her, as a "zone of influence," of the whole Mediterranean coast (excepting Tangier, which remained "internationalized"), a territory of about 28,000 square kilometres to a great extent mountainous but extremely rich in mineral deposits. This territory Spain is now endeavoring to administer as a Spanish possession but owing to the warlike character of the inhabitants, whose hatred of the Spaniards has come down from their wars in Spain during the Middle Ages, she has not so far been successful. Notwithstanding that she has an army of about 100,000 in her "zone of influence," warfare has been practically continuous and she has thus far been able to occupy but some 4000 square kilometres.

France on the other hand, with 80,000 troops, has already been able to occupy over 200,000 square kilometres of her protectorate and has established practically complete security and orderly administration throughout this occupied region. The territory occupied comprizes two distinct parts, the one including nearly all the Atlantic coast and extending some 200 kilometres into the interior, and the other extending along the Algerian frontier. The territory still unoccupied includes chiefly the high mountainous regions of the Atlas, parts of which are practically unknown.

That it has been possible to obtain such results in so short a time within this immense territory, hitherto exposed to brigandage, tribal warfare and arbitrary government, is a remarkable example of French ability in dealing with the North African races.

The governing principle of the French Protectorate has been the avoidance, except in a few indispensable cases, of making any changes in the native system of government which is extremely simple and well-adapted to the present needs of the country. In this way serious offense to native susceptibility, the more acute because in Morocco as in other Mohammedan countries government and religion are practically inseparable, has been avoided and it has been possible to escape from arousing any extensive popular hostility. Over the native government, however, a system of control has been established with powers to oversee its work and to compel it to act in accordance with the laws and customs of the country. For this purpose the Protectorate has been divided into two "zones," Western Morocco, in which the control is administered directly by the French Resident General, General Lyautey, and Eastern Morocco, including the territories adjoining the Algerian frontier, administered by a High Commissioner appointed by the Resident General. Each zone is divided into "regions," six in western and two in eastern Morocco, and each region into "circuits," each of which contains one or more "information bureaux" ("bureaux de renseignements") which keep closely informed in regard to the conduct of the native officials and to which natives and foreigners may bring complaints for investigation. The personnel of this control is practically wholly military. A General administers each region, a Colonel each circuit and junior officers compose the staffs of the information bureaux. The Resident General at present has his headquarters at Rabat. This French control has been accepted by the Moorish officials with surprisingly good grace and in most cases they have apparently welcomed the change to a régime of regular salaries and security of official tenure during good behaviour from one under which offices had to be bought,

superiors had constantly to be propitiated with gifts and honesty was impossible. Formerly Moorish officials rarely received their salaries but were allowed practically a free hand in their exactions upon those whom they governed, limited only by the degree of favour which they enjoyed at the Sultan's Court.

In addition to this administrative control, the French have already established a system of schools, hospitals and agricultural credits upon a coöperative basis for the natives. The administration of justice, so far as it affects only the natives, is left to the Cadis but a French official is present at all trials and all sentences to over one year imprisonment must be approved by the Resident General. Suits regarding title to real estate must still be adjudged by the native Cadi, but according to a recent decree, all land owners may now have their land registered and their titles definitely ascertained and officially declared, by a system closely resembling the Torrens Act. This will prove of inestimable benefit in a country where through the collusion of native officials and land owners it was formerly practically impossible for a purchaser to ascertain what he was actually acquiring. Although the new registration of land is optional, on account of its obvious advantages, it is expected that eventually all land will come under this system which also withdraws it from the competence of the Cadi and places it directly under the French judges. The administration of justice where foreigners are affected remains in the consular courts of the nation to which the foreigner belongs, according to the international treaties, except that the French have recently given up their consular courts and have established a regular system of French courts with a court of appeal at Rabat. It is hoped that foreign governments, appreciating the benefits of these courts, will also eventually renounce their extra-territorial jurisdiction in their favour.

Perhaps the most important reform effected by France has been to reduce to something like order the chaos of Cherifian finance. When the Protectorate was established the Sultan's Government owed 200 million francs to Euro-

pean bankers, the amount of loans contracted in 1904 and 1910, and in addition 120 million francs, the amount of certain French and Spanish war indemnities. As a guarantee for the interest of these loans, amounting to 15 million francs annually, the Sultan had been obliged to pledge to the bankers the entire customs revenue, the revenues from government monopolies and lands and his principal revenues from the open ports, all of which were collected by agents of the bankers. The revenues remaining to him were for the most part uncollectible and he was reduced, in order to maintain his dwindling authority, to levying heavier and heavier taxes upon the few tribes whose territories lay near his capital and who were unable to make any effective resistance. These revenues however were entirely insufficient and except in the neighborhood of Fez his authority was scarcely recognized and the country was becoming more and more a prey to the incessant and devastating conflicts of the more warlike tribes.

Since the French occupation and the re-establishment of order, the old taxes have not been changed but they have been regularly collected under French supervision. The result has proved highly gratifying as it appears certain that it will be unnecessary to increase any of them but that they will be entirely sufficient to meet not only the interest on the loans but all current expenses of government. Outside financial assistance will only be required to execute the public works essential to the development of a country where at present practically none exist and this France is about to furnish through a loan of 175 million francs which is now being discussed by the French parliament. Nevertheless with only the existing revenues it has been possible with the aid of the troops to execute certain especially urgent public works. A few short roads have been made near the Atlantic ports, a few bridges have been built and narrow-gauge railways have been constructed, one from Sale almost to Meknes, which it is expected to reach next July, and another from Rabat to Casablanca and Bu-Rechid, on the route to Marakech, some 300 kilometres in all. In eastern Morocco a narrow-gauge railway has

been built from the Algerian frontier at Lalla-Marnia to Taourirt and will eventually be pushed on to Taza and Fez. Telegraph lines have been established along the Atlantic coast, and to Meknes, Fez and Marakech. Elementary as these works may seem, the progress which they indicate will be apparent when it is realized that only two years ago not a mile of road or of telegraph line existed in Morocco outside the limits of a few coast towns. The most important works now required are for the improvement of the ports, now all open roadsteads where loading and unloading merchandise is impracticable during prolonged periods. Such works are projected at Rabat, Mazagan, Safi, Mogador, Kenitra, a new port since the French occupation, and Casablanca. The last works will be on a large scale and are estimated to cost 39 million francs and to be finished in 1920.

The results of the establishment of peace and security are especially seen in the extraordinary increase of European immigration and the development of foreign trade. When the Protectorate was declared in 1911, there were in the whole of the present occupied region about two or three thousand Europeans, chiefly residing at Casablanca and Rabat. Fifteen months later, in July 1913, there were fifty thousand Europeans in this region, exclusive of the military, of whom 38,000 resided in the coast towns (20,600 at Casablanca) and the remainder were scattered through the country districts and interior towns where before the occupation there were practically no Europeans. Of those residing in the towns, 25,850 were French, 6365 were Spanish, 4485 were Italian, 773 were English and 245 were German. There were practically no Americans. A large part of this European population consists of labourers and artisans, who are chiefly engaged in building and various other construction works. A majority of the remainder are small shopkeepers and business men. Some 257 have however acquired altogether about 73,054 hectares of agricultural land, especially along the Atlantic coast and Algerian frontier but also in the regions of Meknes and Marakech. The great majority of these are French and so far they have



principally devoted themselves to growing wheat, barley, maize, beans and market vegetables. In the future cattle raising will no doubt be an important industry as well as the growing of grapes and olives. Experiments for growing cotton have been very successful when made with Egyptian seed but have failed when made with American seed. Altogether with the large amount of fertile agricultural land at hand and the splendid climate, the agricultural development of Morocco should be rapid and far surpass that of Algeria. It may be noted however that even now in addition to the Europeans who own land, a much greater number are directly interested in agriculture through partnerships entered into with natives. In these partnerships the European generally furnishes the native with the necessary seed for sowing and the oxen for ploughing his land or with cattle for breeding, the native undertaking to give him half the crop or the offspring.

The extraordinary increase in foreign trade since the French occupation will be seen from the following figures: the total exports and imports, exclusive of all supplies for the troops, amounted in 1908 to 101,110,712 francs; in 1910 to 110,634,707 francs; in 1911, largely owing to the French intervention, to 159,246,838 francs; and finally in 1912, after the establishment of the protectorate, to 202,337,692 francs. During all these years imports have exceeded exports, the former during 1912 amounting to 130,242,475 francs and the latter to 72,095,217 francs. The principal imports were cotton goods, almost entirely from England, sugar from France and Germany, tea from England and Germany, candles, woolens, silks, wines and spirits, the last almost entirely from France. The principal exports were live-stock, corn, wool, almonds, hides, eggs, dried vegetables and olive oil. The value of this trade passing through the five Atlantic ports in 1912 was 175,166,692 francs (through Casablanca 63,266,123 francs), and across the Algerian frontier 27,171,000 francs. Of the nations chiefly participating in it, France participated to the sum of 84,371,675 francs; England to that of 57,668,432 francs; Germany to that of 28,897,331 francs and Spain to



that of 11,225,340 francs. The foreign commerce of Morocco has thus nearly doubled in two years and appears from the still unpublished statistics for 1913 to be maintaining this rate of increase. Doubtless the increase of trade would have been still greater had not the extremely rapid immigration brought about much unfortunate speculation in real estate and a considerable increase in the cost of living. These hindrances are but temporary however and the French authorities have already taken measures which it is hoped will do away with them.

The writer desires to express his indebtedness to MM. René Besnard and Camille Aymard from whose excellent work ("L'Oeuvre Française au Maroc," Hachette et Cie. 1914) the statistics and certain facts in the above article have been taken.